

**INTERNATIONAL SECURITY / MIDDLE EAST UPDATE**  
**May 7 -13, 2010**

1. [U.S. Response to Head of OSCE Anti-Terrorism Unit, Raphael Perl](#) (05-13-2010)
2. [Obama Offers Support for Afghan Peace Jirga](#) (05-12-2010)
3. [United States Imposes Sanctions on Two Terrorist Leaders](#) (05-12-2010)
4. [Clinton Pledges Long-Term U.S. Commitment to Afghanistan](#) (05-11-2010)
5. [Message from Obama on Peaceful Nuclear Agreement with Russia](#) (05-10-2010)
6. [Mideast Peace Talks Are Serious, Wide-Ranging](#) (05-10-2010)
7. [Karzai Visit to Washington Comes at Important Time, U.S. Says](#) (05-07-2010)
8. [Highlighting the U.S. Commitment to Nuclear Disarmament](#) (05-07-2010)

-----

**1. [U.S. Response to Head of OSCE Anti-Terrorism Unit, Raphael Perl](#) (05-13-2010)**  
**U.S. seeks support, builds partnerships and forges international coalitions**

United States Mission to the OSCE - as delivered by Ambassador Ian Kelly to the Permanent Council, Vienna.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Perl, welcome to the Permanent Council and thank you for your comprehensive report on the status of the work of the OSCE's Action against Terrorism Unit (ATU). As you noted, last week's foiled attempt in Times Square and last month's attacks in Moscow's subway demonstrated, terrorism is, sadly, not a diminishing threat and is more complex and more global than ever before.

President Obama recognizes that the United States cannot address this threat alone. Rather, we have reached out and will continue to reach out, on the basis of mutual interests and mutual respect, to forge international coalitions. We remain committed to building partnerships, including with organizations like the OSCE, the United Nations, the European Union, the private sector, and civil society. This is an important part of our comprehensive approach to addressing this threat. It is based on the premise that military power, intelligence operations, and law enforcement alone will

not eliminate the underlying political, economic, and social conditions that help put so many individuals in situations where they might choose the path to violence. Our approach recognizes that our counterterrorism efforts can best succeed when they make central respect for human rights and the rule of law.

Diplomacy and capacity-building are two essential pillars of our new approach, and both are areas where our partnership with this organization is of real value. We are focused on building political will through consistent diplomatic engagement with senior counterterrorism policymakers and practitioners for common counterterrorism objectives. Through its work on promoting critical energy infrastructure protection, building public-private partnerships, combating the misuse of the internet for terrorist purposes, countering violent extremism, and enhancing travel document security, the OSCE ATU has provided useful and unique opportunities for this engagement and for that we are grateful. The United States is particularly pleased to have been able to support the OSCE's work in a number of these areas this past year and will consider how best to continue doing so in the coming period.

I would like to highlight, in particular, the OSCE's contributions to our efforts to counter violent extremism and radicalization leading to terrorism. Identifying the drivers of radicalization and how to address them most effectively lies at the heart of the United States' approach to addressing the terrorist threat over the long term. Much work needs to be done at the national, regional, and global levels to help us address and reverse the drivers of violent extremism so that Al-Qa'ida and its affiliates must cope with a shrinking pool of recruits. This is a classic cross-dimensional topic that is tailor-made for an OSCE region-wide approach. We recall the October 2008 workshop, sponsored by the British Government and are interested in supporting further follow up at a regional, sub-regional, or national level.

Finally, we hope the ATU will take a hard look at ways in which it can support the OSCE efforts to assist Afghanistan, through partnerships and practical outreach with neighboring states in Central Asia. We also hope the ATU will actively seek out ways to support and reinforce efforts outlined under UNSCR 1540 to combat the smuggling of weapons of mass destruction by non-state actors.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

---

## **2. Obama Offers Support for Afghan Peace Jirga (05-12-2010)**

By Stephen Kaufman  
Staff Writer

Washington — President Obama expressed support for the Afghan government's planned consultative peace jirga aimed at discussing how to reconcile Taliban fighters with the rest of the country, describing the national council as "an important milestone that America supports."

Speaking alongside Afghan President Hamid Karzai at the White House May 12 after their meeting, Obama said the United States supports efforts to "open the door" to Taliban fighters who are willing to cut their ties to al-Qaida and other extremist groups, renounce violence, and accept the Afghan constitution, including respect for human rights and women's rights.

"President Karzai should be able to work to reintegrate those individuals into Afghan society," Obama said. Emphasizing the need for an Afghan-led effort, the president added that the peace jirga would create a framework to move toward that reconciliation.

The jirga, scheduled for May 29, is expected to attract 1,500 Afghan men and women representing political, tribal, business and civil society communities. The goal, according to a May 12 commentary by Karzai published in the Washington Post, is to “chart a way forward for engaging those who fight against us.”

Obama said a political component is ultimately needed to achieve Afghan peace and stability. “This is not just going to be a military solution,” he said.

The peace jirga, as well as a July donors conference in Kabul, sends a strong message of the Afghan government’s “commitment to rule of law and good governance and human rights and women’s rights,” and as the government gains more confidence from the Afghan people, “their fear of the Taliban weakens,” he said.

But the president added that the military component remains necessary to break the momentum of the Taliban and create additional incentives for their fighters to make peace with the Afghan government.

“At what point do the Taliban start making different calculations about what’s in their interests?” Obama said. “How the Afghan people feel about these issues is in part going to be dependent on our success in terms of carrying out our mission there.”

The president said the United States will continue to work with Afghan and international partners to “do everything in our power to avoid actions that harm the Afghan people” as military efforts by Afghan forces and the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) continue against the insurgents.

Although the Taliban are responsible for most of the innocent civilian deaths in Afghanistan, Obama said he and ISAF commander General Stanley McChrystal are “ultimately accountable” for civilian casualties caused by coalition military operations and “we do not take that lightly.”

Coalition forces are putting themselves at risk to reduce civilian casualties, and that is “a burden we’re willing to bear,” he said, but “mistakes are going to be made.”

Karzai said he and Obama discussed the “ways and means” of protecting civilians and acknowledged “considerable progress” since the arrival of McChrystal as ISAF commander.

Karzai welcomed President Obama’s commitment to transfer the responsibility for detention facilities to the Afghan government, saying he considered it “a major point of progress in our conversations.”

According to a [May 12 joint statement](#) by the two leaders, the transfer will begin in January 2011 with the Parwan detention facility, and the United States will continue to assist the Afghan government in building “safe, secure and humane corrections systems.”

“Both presidents recognized that a successful transition will be an important milestone toward achieving President Karzai’s inaugural pledge of having the Afghan Government assume full responsibility over detention operations,” the statement said, adding that President Obama had “emphasized his strong desire to see all search, arrest and detention operations be carried out by the Afghan National Security Forces.”

In his remarks, President Obama acknowledged that President Karzai has made progress in improving governance in Afghanistan, but said both leaders agreed that “much more work needs to be done.”

Obama pledged that the United States will “sustain a robust commitment” toward the country as the Afghan government assumes more security responsibility, and he welcomed the large delegation of Afghan ministers and officials who had come to Washington for the bilateral talks.

“The presence here today of so many leaders from both our governments underscores how we can partner across a full range of areas, including development and agriculture, education and health, rule of law and women’s rights,” Obama said. “Together, we can unleash Afghanistan’s vast potential.”

---

### **3. United States Imposes Sanctions on Two Terrorist Leaders (05-12-2010)**

By Merle David Kellerhals Jr.  
Staff Writer

Washington — The United States imposed financial sanctions on two leaders of a Yemen-based terrorist group known as al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), a loose affiliate of the transnational al-Qaida group that engineered the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on Washington and New York.

Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton designated the two AQAP leaders — Qasim al-Rimi and Nayif al-Qahtani — as terrorists on May 11, P.J. Crowley, assistant secretary of state for public affairs, said in a prepared statement. Clinton made the terrorist designation April 6, but it could not be applied before it was published in the Federal Register, an official U.S. government record.

“Today’s designations of Qasim al-Rimi and Nayif al-Qahtani directly respond to the threats posed to the United States — and U.S. interests in the Arabian Peninsula — by AQAP and its senior leaders,” Ambassador Daniel Benjamin, the State Department’s counterterrorism coordinator, said. “These cases illustrate our determination to pursue AQAP and undermine AQAP senior leaders’ planning and coordination capabilities.”

The United States designated AQAP a foreign terrorist organization in January and approved financial and travel sanctions against its two primary senior leaders, Nasir al-Wahishi and Said al-Shihri.

Al-Rimi is AQAP’s senior military commander and played a critical role in reviving the regional al-Qaida affiliate.

“In 2007, he and AQAP Emir Nasir al-Wahishi announced the emergence of al-Qaida in Yemen (AQY), AQAP’s predecessor group,” Crowley said. In addition to his activities as AQAP’s senior military commander, al-Rimi has played an important role in recruiting the current generation of militants making up AQAP.

Al-Qahtani was included in the terrorist designation because of his role as liaison between al-Qaida cells that operate clandestinely in Yemen and Saudi Arabia, Crowley said.

Al-Qahtani also manages AQAP operations in Yemen and receives financial support for attacks against targets in Yemen and Saudi Arabia, Crowley said. "In addition to planning, financing, and overseeing terrorist attacks in Yemen and Saudi Arabia, some of which have targeted U.S. interests in the Arabian Peninsula, al-Qahtani also serves as a key spokesperson for AQAP," he added.

The main al-Qaida group is believed to be in hiding in the rugged mountain range that separates Afghanistan and Pakistan along with the remnants of the Taliban regime that controlled Afghanistan before its expulsion by a U.S.-led coalition in late 2001.

The U.N. Sanctions Committee, created by the Security Council's Resolution 1267, added both men to its Consolidated List of individuals associated with al-Qaida and the Taliban on May 11. The U.N. action will require all of its members to implement an assets freeze, a travel ban and an arms embargo against these individuals.

Terrorism experts believe that eliminating or severely restricting sources of financing for these types of groups provides an effective long-term measure that can thwart the group's future actions and choke off its access to outside support.

"The actions taken today against AQAP leadership support the U.S. effort to degrade the capabilities of this group," Crowley said. "We are determined to eliminate AQAP's ability to execute violent attacks and to disrupt, dismantle and defeat their networks."

---

#### **4. Clinton Pledges Long-Term U.S. Commitment to Afghanistan (05-11-2010)**

By Stephen Kaufman  
Staff Writer

Washington — The Obama administration recognizes that the futures of the United States and Afghanistan are shared and pledges a long-term commitment to the Afghan people that will endure long after U.S. forces have left the country, Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton said at the opening of high-level bilateral discussions in Washington.

[Speaking at the State Department May 11](#), Clinton said that as the government of President Hamid Karzai assumes greater responsibility for the country's security beginning in 2011, the United States will continue to provide it with support, including "a sustained focus on economic, social and political development, as well as continued training of Afghan security forces."

The secretary acknowledged that before the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on New York and Washington, the United States and other countries did not pay enough attention to the situation inside Afghanistan, which was suffering under the rule of the Taliban and providing a safe haven to al-Qaida.

"We have learned the lessons of the past," Clinton said. "President Obama has made it clear that we will not allow that kind of detachment and oversight again. That is why his comprehensive review of our Afghan policy resulted in a substantial increase in our commitment to Afghanistan, not only military, but civilian as well." The U.S. civilian commitment "will remain long into the future."

Clinton cited "fragile" progress in the country in recent years, with advances in free media outlets, communications, health care and education, including for 2 million girls. At the same time, she said, Afghanistan still faces threats from extremist violence and narcotics trafficking.

"Security cannot be divorced from development," she said. Since the Obama administration took office, it has tripled the number of U.S. civilians in Afghanistan. They are working with Afghan and international partners to strengthen government institutions and expand economic opportunities.

President Karzai said Afghanistan will continue to be a partner against terrorism while also working to "build its institutions, to preserve its progress and to walk toward the future with steady, strong steps."

He said his government has a broad strategy for development and institution building, as well as a vision of the future that he and his delegation of ministers and senior officials will present to U.S. officials during their meetings in Washington.

Their strategy "would give Afghanistan long-term institutional, economic and security stability so Afghanistan can, in a few years' time, not be any more a burden on your shoulders, so that Afghanistan can stand on its own feet, so Afghanistan can defend its country, so Afghanistan can feed its people with its own income, so we can pay for ... our life from our own pockets," he said.

Karzai said he envisions Afghanistan's economy eventually profiting from the country's mineral resources, and Afghanistan serving as a transportation hub for central, south and west Asia.

"Afghanistan will remain a strong and good and economically viable partner with the United States and our other allies," he said.

U.S. Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan [Richard Holbrooke told reporters May 10](#) that the bilateral discussions in Washington will cover "the whole panoply of issues." He mentioned agriculture, security, rule of law, national and local governance, and economic issues, including the development of Afghan mineral resources.

The Obama administration has entered "a period of close strategic partnership" with the Afghan government, he said. Between President Obama's January 2009 inauguration and the beginning of President Karzai's second term in November 2009, Afghanistan's presidential election "hung over us like a ... very dark, complicated cloud."

"That period is long since gone," Holbrooke said.

The Obama administration is trying to strengthen the Afghan government by channeling more U.S. assistance through Afghan authorities. Holbrooke said that while the level of U.S. assistance sent through the Afghan government has risen from less than 9 percent of aid in January 2009 to 14 percent today, the goal is for that figure to rise to 50 percent.

Due to U.S. congressional requirements for accountability, "we have to be sure that we certify ministries to receive the aid directly," he said.

"There are only something like three ministries that are fully certified, but we're moving, and that will be one of the topics of the next few days," Holbrooke said.

---



**5. Message from Obama on Peaceful Nuclear Agreement with Russia (05-10-2010)**  
**Resubmits proposed agreement by U.S. and Russia for congressional review**

The White House, Office of the Press Secretary

To the Congress of the United States:

I am pleased to transmit to the Congress, pursuant to sections 123 b. and 123 d. of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended (42 U.S.C. 2153(b), (d)) (the “Act”), the text of a proposed Agreement Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Russian Federation for Cooperation in the Field of Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy (the “Agreement”). I am also pleased to transmit my written approval of the proposed Agreement and determination that the proposed Agreement will promote, and will not constitute an unreasonable risk to, the common defense and security, together with a copy of an unclassified Nuclear Proliferation Assessment Statement (NPAS) concerning the Agreement. In accordance with section 123 of the Act, as amended by title XII of the Foreign Affairs Reform and Restructuring Act of 1998 (Public Law 105-277), classified annexes to the NPAS, prepared by the Secretary of State in consultation with the Director of National Intelligence, summarizing relevant classified information, will be submitted to the Congress separately.

The proposed Agreement was signed in Moscow on May 6, 2008. Former President George W. Bush approved the Agreement and authorized its execution, and he made the determinations required by section 123 b. of the Act. (Presidential Determination 2008-19 of May 5, 2008, 73 FR 27719 (May 14, 2008)).

On May 13, 2008, President Bush transmitted the Agreement, together with his Presidential Determination, an unclassified NPAS, and classified annex, to the Congress for review (see House Doc. 110-112, May 13, 2008). On September 8, 2008, prior to the completion of the 90-day continuous session review period, he sent a message informing the Congress that “in view of recent actions by the Government of the Russian Federation incompatible with peaceful relations with its sovereign and democratic neighbor, Georgia,” he had determined that his earlier determination (concerning performance of the proposed Agreement promoting, and not constituting an unreasonable risk to, the common defense and security) was no longer effective. He further stated that if circumstances should permit future reconsideration by the Congress, a new determination would be made and the proposed Agreement resubmitted.

After review of the situation and of the NPAS and classified annex, I have concluded: (1) that the situation in Georgia need no longer be considered an obstacle to proceeding with the proposed Agreement; and (2) that the level and scope of U.S.-Russia cooperation on Iran are sufficient to justify resubmitting the proposed Agreement to the Congress for the statutory review period of 90 days of continuous session and, absent enactment of legislation to disapprove it, taking the remaining steps to bring it into force.

The Secretary of State, the Secretary of Energy, and the members of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) have recommended that I resubmit the proposed Agreement to the Congress for review. The joint memorandum submitted to me by the Secretaries of State and Energy and a letter from the Chairman of the NRC stating the views of the Commission are enclosed.

I have considered the views and recommendations of the interested departments and agencies in reviewing the proposed Agreement, and have determined that performance of the proposed Agreement will promote, and will not constitute an unreasonable risk to, the common defense and

security. Accordingly, I have approved the proposed Agreement and urge the Congress to give the proposed Agreement favorable consideration.

My reasons for resubmitting the proposed Agreement to the Congress for its review at this time are as follows:

The United States and Russia have significantly increased cooperation on nuclear nonproliferation and civil nuclear energy in the last 12 months, starting with the establishment of the Bilateral Presidential Commission Working Group on Nuclear Energy and Security. In our July 2009 Joint Statement on Nuclear Cooperation, Russian President Medvedev and I acknowledged the shared vision between the United States and Russia of the growth of clean, safe, and secure nuclear energy for peaceful purposes and committed to work together to bring into force the agreement for nuclear cooperation to achieve this end. The Russian government has indicated its support for a new United Nations Security Council Resolution on Iran and has begun to engage on specific resolution elements with P5 members in New York. On April 8, 2010, the United States and Russia signed an historic New START Treaty significantly reducing the number of strategic nuclear weapons both countries may deploy. On April 13, both sides signed the Protocol to amend the 2000 U.S.-Russian Plutonium Management and Disposition Agreement, which is an essential step toward fulfilling each country's commitment to effectively and transparently dispose of at least 34 metric tons of excess weapon-grade plutonium, enough for about 17,000 nuclear weapons, with more envisioned to be disposed in the future. Russia recently established an international nuclear fuel reserve in Angarsk to provide an incentive to other nations not to acquire sensitive uranium enrichment technologies. Joint U.S. and Russian leadership continue to successfully guide the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism as it becomes a durable international institution. The United States believes these events demonstrate significant progress in the U.S.-Russia nuclear nonproliferation relationship and that it is now appropriate to move forward with this Agreement for cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

The proposed Agreement has been negotiated in accordance with the Act and other applicable laws. In my judgment, it meets all applicable statutory requirements and will advance the nonproliferation and other foreign policy interests of the United States.

The proposed Agreement provides a comprehensive framework for peaceful nuclear cooperation with Russia based on a mutual commitment to nuclear nonproliferation. It has a term of 30 years, and permits the transfer, subject to subsequent U.S. licensing decisions, of technology, material, equipment (including reactors), and components for nuclear research and nuclear power production. It does not permit transfers of Restricted Data. Transfers of sensitive nuclear technology, sensitive nuclear facilities, and major critical components of such facilities may only occur if the Agreement is amended to cover such transfers. In the event of termination, key nonproliferation conditions and controls continue with respect to material, equipment, and components subject to the Agreement.

The Russian Federation is a nuclear weapon state party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). Like the United States, it has a "voluntary offer" safeguards agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). That agreement gives the IAEA the right to apply safeguards on all source or special fissionable material at peaceful-use nuclear facilities on a list provided by Russia. The Russian Federation is also a party to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material, which establishes international standards of physical protection for the use, storage, and transport of nuclear material. It is also a member of the Nuclear Suppliers Group, whose non-legally binding guidelines set forth standards for the responsible export of nuclear commodities for peaceful use. A more detailed discussion of Russia's domestic civil nuclear program and its nuclear nonproliferation policies and practices, including its nuclear export policies



and practices, is provided in the NPAS and in the classified annexes to the NPAS submitted to the Congress separately.

This transmittal shall constitute a submittal for purposes of both sections 123 b. and 123 d. of the Act. My Administration is prepared to immediately begin the consultations with the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations and House Committee on Foreign Affairs as provided in section 123 b. Upon completion of the 30-day continuous session period provided for in section 123 b., the 60-day continuous session period provided for in section 123 d. shall commence.

Barack Obama

---

## **6. Mideast Peace Talks Are Serious, Wide-Ranging (05-10-2010)**

By Merle David Kellerhals Jr.  
Staff Writer

Washington — Israeli and Palestinian negotiators have engaged in “serious and wide-ranging” indirect talks with U.S. Special Envoy George Mitchell in a process designed to resolve critical issues so that negotiators eventually can begin face-to-face negotiations, State Department spokesman Philip Crowley says.

“Both parties are taking some steps to help create an atmosphere that is conducive to successful talks, including President Abbas’ statement that he will work against incitement of any sort and Prime Minister Netanyahu’s statement that there will be no construction at the Ramat Shlomo project for two years,” Crowley said in a [prepared statement](#) released May 9 in Washington. Crowley was referring to Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

“They are both trying to move forward in difficult circumstances and we commend them for that,” Crowley added.

Mitchell, who returns to the region during the week of May 10 for more talks, met first with Israeli negotiators in Jerusalem before heading to the West Bank town of Ramallah for talks with Palestinian officials. During his meetings, he met separately with Abbas and Netanyahu, Crowley said.

“We have received commitments from both sides, and we have made assurances to both sides, that are enabling us to move forward,” Crowley said. “The full scope of these discussions will remain private.”

Mitchell met with Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton May 10 before preparing to return to the region.

“As both parties know, if either takes significant actions during the proximity talks that we judge would seriously undermine trust, we will respond to hold them accountable and ensure that negotiations continue,” Crowley’s statement said.

Crowley, the assistant secretary of state for public affairs, said Mitchell during his meetings emphasized the importance of making progress to enable the parties to move to direct negotiations that will result in a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

For a brief period in March, former Senator Mitchell, the U.S. special envoy for Middle East peace, brokered an agreement between Palestinians and Israelis to begin indirect talks, a phased approach to full resumption of negotiations. But those talks were stalled almost as quickly as they were announced after the [Israelis announced new settlement construction](#) of 1,600 homes in East Jerusalem.

The United States, working with the Quartet for Middle East Peace — which is the United Nations, the United States, the European Union and Russia — has supported and promoted a two-state solution to the current Arab-Israeli conflict under which Israel and a new Palestinian state live at peace side by side.

The meetings mark the first return to negotiations in 17 months and are part of a four-month period of indirect negotiations called “proximity talks.” Some of the critical issues to be resolved include the status of Jerusalem, the return of Palestinian refugees and what the final borders of a Palestinian state will be.

---

## **7. Karzai Visit to Washington Comes at Important Time, U.S. Says (05-07-2010)**

By Stephen Kaufman  
Staff Writer

Washington — Afghan President Hamid Karzai leads a delegation of senior Afghan officials to the United States May 10–13 for what Obama administration officials describe as an opportunity to evaluate the broad strategic partnership between the two countries as they focus on shared security, governance and development goals.

Speaking to reporters May 7, U.S. Army Lieutenant General Douglas Lute, special assistant to the president for Afghanistan and Pakistan, said Karzai’s visit comes midway between President Obama’s [December 2009 announcement of his strategy for Afghanistan](#) and its one-year review in December 2010.

Lute said it also comes ahead of Karzai’s consultative peace jirga in May and his hosting of an international conference in Kabul in July, where he is expected to deliver action plans on his November 2009 inauguration commitments, followed in September by Afghan parliamentary elections and a second round of the U.S.-Afghan strategic dialogue.

Karzai’s visit “takes place at a very important time,” Deputy National Security Advisor Ben Rhodes said.

“This can be an important opportunity for the two sides to comes together and to ... take stock of where we are, take stock of what the next steps are, what additional steps might be taken, what additional support the international community can provide, and what additional steps the Afghans can take to implement their own plans as relates to improving governance and security in their country,” Rhodes said.

The Afghan delegation will include the ministers of foreign affairs, defense, interior, finance, education, agriculture, labor, and health. They will meet with U.S. officials, including Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, at the State Department on May 11, and with President Obama at the White House May 12.

The two presidents will have “more than three hours together, which itself is extraordinary,” Lute said. The large delegation of Afghan Cabinet officials will also allow for “break-out sessions and ... bilateral sessions around security, around governance, and around development issues that will allow us to go into much more depth.” The four-day visit also allows them to engage with member of the U.S. Congress and analysts at policy institutes, he said.

Rhodes said Obama administration officials are also approaching the talks with an eye toward beginning the transition of security and governance from U.S. and other international forces in Afghanistan to Afghan authorities in July 2011.

#### OPERATION HAMKARI UNDER WAY IN KANDAHAR

Karzai’s visit comes as U.S. defense officials say they are expanding the Afghan and international effort to assert Afghan government control beyond Helmand province to Kandahar.

Army General David Petraeus, the commander of U.S. Central Command, told the MSNBC television channel May 6 that “we have already long since commenced the operations in Kandahar” to expand security and establish local governance “that can be seen as legitimate in the eyes of the people.”

“This is not going to be an operation like Fallujah in Iraq, where you start at one side of the city and fight your way to the other and clear it of insurgents. Rather, it’s going to be an expanding tide, if you will, a rising tide of security,” Petraeus said.

In testimony before the U.S. House of Representatives’ Armed Services Committee May 5, U.S. Marine Corps Lieutenant General John Paxton Jr., who is director of operations at the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said the effort in Kandahar is named Hamkari, which means “cooperation” in Dari, and was “planned and will be conducted with our Afghan partners in the lead.”

As with Operation Moshtarak, which has been conducted in Helmand province, the coalition is integrating military efforts to improve security with civilian projects that are focused on improving local governance, development and agriculture.

“The focus of Hamkari is on providing Kandahar with credible and effective governance that gives the population hope for the future. More effective government will deliver security, basic services, development and employment. If these ends are achieved, the people of Kandahar will reject the insurgency and support the government,” Paxton said.

“A more capable, representative and responsive government will be able to bring the economic development and rule of law that the area so badly needs,” he said.

Under Secretary of Defense for Policy Michelle Flournoy told the committee that Afghan and international civilian operations begin with an assessment for each district, asking “What do the people need and want? What do they view as important? What do they prioritize? What do they expect? And what will be most meaningful to them?”

The civilians are focusing on grass-roots efforts, with “a lot more building at the local, district, and moving ... up to provincial level,” while “appreciating the importance of incorporating traditional societal structures” such as tribes and ethnic groups.

The attention to more local needs and appreciation for the demographics and cultural landscape in each district “is a really key emphasis in Afghanistan going forward,” Flournoy said.

---

## **8. Highlighting the U.S. Commitment to Nuclear Disarmament (05-07-2010)**

*This May 6 statement by Ellen Tauscher, under secretary of state for arms control and international security, was taken from the State Department’s blog DipNote.*

On Monday, Secretary Clinton delivered the [opening U.S. statement](#) at the Eighth Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference (NPT RevCon), reinforcing President Obama’s goal of achieving the peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons.

“I represent a President and a country committed to a vision of a world without nuclear weapons and to taking the concrete steps necessary that will help us get there,” Secretary Clinton said. “I come to this conference with sincere and serious proposals to advance the fundamental aims of the NPT and strengthen the global nonproliferation regime.”

Ever since the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty entered into force in 1970, the Parties to the Treaty have gathered every five years to review its effectiveness and members’ implementation of its provisions. We hope that the 2010 Review Conference will reaffirm the support of Parties for the Treaty, and also strengthen both the NPT and the broader nuclear nonproliferation regime.

At the conference, the United States delegation will hold a number of briefings for other delegations and non-proliferation NGOs on key NPT-related issues. The first of these, held at the United Nations on Wednesday, focused on our commitment to disarmament, which is one of the NPT’s three central pillars. [Assistant Secretary of Defense for Global Strategic Affairs Dr. Michael Nacht](#) and [Under Secretary of Energy for Nuclear Security Thomas D’Agostino](#) joined me in highlighting U.S. disarmament efforts.

I began the discussion with a review of the agenda for disarmament outlined by President Obama in Prague one year ago, and I discussed the concrete steps that the U.S. has been taking since then on this issue, such as signing the New START Treaty, releasing the Nuclear Posture Review (NPR), and hosting the Nuclear Security Summit. From there, Assistant Secretary Nacht provided a more intensive explanation of the NPR, including reductions in the role and size of nuclear weapons in U.S. defense policy. Administrator D’Agostino then discussed reductions to our nuclear stockpile and how the Department of Energy’s National Nuclear Security Administration is leading U.S. efforts to dispose of excess fissile material. He also spoke about reductions in our nuclear weapons complex and how the NPR has affected our nuclear stockpile management.

After our official remarks, we were able to spend forty-five minutes answering a number of questions from the mixed audience of delegation members, NGO representatives and press. Those exchanges helped us to make clear how much effort the United States is making on the disarmament pillar of the NPT and to further explain our goals for this Review Conference. Questions ranged from detailed inquiries on our stockpile management techniques to our policies on nuclear weapons in Europe and how the United States intends to move forward on our efforts to increase peace and stability worldwide. Many of the questions focused on the recently-released NPR and prompted a more in-depth discussion of the conclusions, policies, and recommendations contained in that document. Unfortunately, there were many more questions than we had time to answer, but we look

*May 13, 2010*

forward to additional discussions on how, by working together, we can achieve President Obama's goal of a world free of nuclear weapons.

This was a fantastic first event for our delegation, highlighting our important transparency and disarmament commitments, and we hope for continued engagement with the non-proliferation community throughout the course of the RevCon. The United States has made a strong effort, but there is still a lot of work to be done — by all of the Treaty Parties.

---